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Rev. Coughlin Aided Front, Court Is Told

Michigan Priest
Named One Director
Of Group, Witness Says

By the Associated Press

New York, April 24.—A "voluntary statement" made to the Federal Bureau of Investigation by John A. Viebrock, one of 16 men on trial for seditious conspiracy, today named the Rev. Charles E. Coughlin, Royal Oak, Mich., radio priest, as having appointed one of the defendants a national director of the Christian Front.

In the statement, read into the Federal Court trial record, Viebrock declared:

"I have known John F. Cassidy (a defendant) since 1926. During the last eight years I have kept company with his sister, Margaret. He was recognized as a national director of the Christian Front, to which he was appointed by Father Coughlin.

"In the summer of 1939, Cassidy merged all Brooklyn units of the Christian Front into one central organization. Before I became a member, the Christian Front started a sport club, which was chartered by the National Rifle Association. Its membership was about 150."

Viebrock's statement said William Gerald Bishop, leader of the alleged conspiracy to overthrow the Government by violence, proposed that the Sport Club be mobilized into squads and given military training "and that the squads be distributed throughout Brooklyn, so they could be mobilized if a state of alarm arose."

Christian Front leaders turned down Bishop's proposal, however, and early last October Bishop organized a group called the "Country Gentlemen," the statement continued.

The statement also asserted that Bishop had instructed him how to make cordite bombs—"not to kill but just powerful enough to smash a window or blow in a door."